

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are pending and stand rejected. Claims 1 and 11 have been amended, support for these amendments can be found in the specification at least on page 2, lines 13-16.

Claims 1-13 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kondo et al. (USP 5,726,728). Claims 1-3 and 6-13 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shimizu et al. (USP 5,739,882, Onishi et al. (USP 5,624,974) or Nakao et al. (USP 6,486,932).

A claimed invention is *prima facie* obvious when three basic criteria are met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the reference themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine the teachings therein. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. And, third, the prior art reference or combined references must teach or suggest all the claim limitations.

Amended claim 1 recites the limitations of the polymeric stratified-phase-separated composite being provided, with its film of liquid side, on a substrate surface having in accordance with a predetermined pattern selected first and second regions, the first regions being functionalized for selective accumulation of the polymerized material and the second regions being functionalized for selective accumulation of the liquid, wherein the supporting members extend selectively *and self-aligned* onto the selected first regions. Amended independent claim 11 recites similar limitations

Kondo, Shimizu, Onishi and Nakao, alone or in combination, fail to teach the limitations of the polymeric stratified-phase-separated composite being provided, with its film of liquid side, on a substrate surface having in accordance with a predetermined pattern selected first and second regions, the first regions being functionalized for selective accumulation of the polymerized material and the second regions being

functionalized for selective accumulation of the liquid, wherein the supporting members extend selectively *and self-aligned* onto the selected first regions.

As noted, a particular advantage of the present invention is that the method enables a polymeric stratified-phase-separated composite which is simple to manufacture and is mechanically robust, in particular when lateral or shear stresses are applied rendering such composites particularly suitable for applications where flexibility is required. In contrast to the cited references and as further described in the specification on page 1, lines 11-24:

The polymeric stratified-phase-separable material is manufactured by means of a method wherein a layer of photo-polymerizable stratified-phase-separable material is subjected to two successive *exposures with ultraviolet light*. The first exposure is a pattern-wise exposure in which the supporting member is formed; the second exposure is a flood exposure wherein the liquid crystal layer and the polymeric layer are formed. The known method is rather cumbersome. For example, having to perform two exposures one of which pattern-wise is not very attractive. Furthermore, the inventors have found that the mechanical robustness of the known stratified-phase-separated composite manufactured in accordance with the known method leaves room for improvement; application of lateral or shear stresses often leads to failure of the stratified-phase-separated composite. Such stresses develop in particular when the laminate is flexed, such flexure being required in flexible or more particular rollable displays, or is heat stressed e.g. to temperatures above 50 °C.

This type of UV manufacturing process is used/described in, for example, Kondo, see col. 15, lines 24-53.

Still further, the selective formation of supporting members onto the first regions of the substrate surface leads to a controlled and self-aligned formation of supporting members in accordance with a predetermined pattern. Being self-aligned, the process of stratified-phase-separation itself need not employ patterning means. More specifically, the number of exposures is reduced from two exposures, one of which is patterned, to one

flood exposure. Thus a more simple method of manufacturing is obtained. See page 2, lines 13-19.

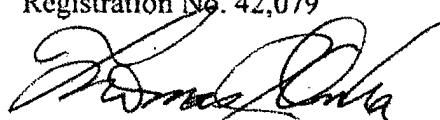
For at least this reason, applicant submits the reason for the rejection has been overcome and respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of independent claims 1 and 11.

With regard to claims 2-10 and 12-13 these claims depend from an independent claim discussed above, which have been shown to be allowable in view of the cited reference. Accordingly, each of claims 2-10 and 12-13 are also allowable by virtue of its dependence from an allowable base claim.

For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all the present claims are patentable in view of the cited references. Entry of this amendment and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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